

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Parruck, et al.

Assignee: Azanda Network Devices

Title: "Backpressuring Using A Serial Bus Interface And A Status Switch Cell"  
(As Amended)

Serial No.: Unknown

Filed: October 12, 2001

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Group Art Unit: Unknown

Atty. Doc. No.: AZA-003-7D/2001-P010

October 12, 2001

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Sir:

Before action on the merits, and before calculating the filing fee, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

IN THE DRAWINGS:

A minor error in Figure 52 is corrected. **A copy of Figure 52 with the correction indicated in red is attached.** In reviewing the correction, the Examiner's attention is direct to page 59, line 22 of the specification through page 60, line 21 and the corrections made to that text (see below). Review and approval of the correction by the Examiner is requested. No subject matter is added by the correction, nor is it the intent of Applicants or the undersigned that any subject matter be added.

IN THE TITLE:

Please change the title of the application to: "Backpressuring Using A Serial Bus Interface And A Status Switch Cell".

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IN THE SPECIFICATION:

**Page 1, before the first sentence of the specification, please add the following header and paragraph:**

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §120 from U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/851,565, filed May 8, 2001.

**The paragraph from page 14, line 31 to page 15, line 10 should be replaced with:**

Figure 4 is a simplified diagram of a router 100 in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. Router 100 includes a plurality of line cards 101-104, a switch fabric 105 and a central processing unit (CPU) 106. The line cards 101-104 are coupled to switch fabric 105 by parallel buses 107-114. In the present example, each of parallel buses 107-114 is a 16-bit SPI-4, Phase II, LVDS parallel bus operating at 400 MHz at a double data rate (DDR). CPU 106 is coupled to line cards 101-104 by another parallel bus 131. In the present example, parallel bus 131 is a 32-bit PCI bus. In this example, each of the line cards can receive network communications in multiple formats. For example, line card 101 is coupled to a fiber optic cable 115 such that line card 101 can receive from cable 115 network communications at OC-192 rates in packets, ATM cells, and/or AAL5 cells. AAL5 cells are considered a type of ATM cell.

**Page 33, the first full paragraph, should be replaced with:**

In accordance with egress application type 11, segmentation block 203 does not perform segmenting per se but rather forwards the 64-byte chunk to memory manager block 204 via the per-port FIFO mechanism described above. Memory manager block 204 issues an enqueue command via enqueue command line 320, and stores the 64-byte chunk in payload memory 217. Per flow queue block 207 adds the BID to the per flow queue for flow #1. The same process flow occurs for the second and third switch cells associated with flow #1.

**Page 34, the second full paragraph, should be replaced with:**

Figure 32 illustrates the general flow of information out of egress MS-SAR 200 in one scenario when the linked lists for flow #1 and flow #2 are dequeued. As each BID is dequeued from a per flow queue, the associated 64-byte chunk is read from payload memory 217 and is supplied via 128-bit wide data bus 324 to reassembly block 205. As explained above in connection with the ingress mode, reassembly block 205 maintains one reassembly queue for each of the 64 logical output ports. If two flows share the same logical output port, then the entire linked list for one flow must be dequeued before the linked list for the next flow having the same logical output port is dequeued. In the example of Figure 8, flow #1 and flow #2 have different logical output ports. The dequeue command as received by memory manager block 204 from per flow queue block 207 contains the port ID (PID) of the one of the 64 logical output ports of line card 103.

**Page 36, the second full paragraph, should be replaced with:**

The AAL5 trailer also contains a sixteen-bit "length of payload" field that indicates the length of the payload of the packet being reassembled. Reassembly block 205 maintains a partial packet byte count value for the packet. As each 64-byte chunk of the packet is received from memory manager block 204, reassembly block 205 adds the number of bytes received to the partial packet byte count value. After the last 64-byte chunk for the packet has been received and the partial packet byte count value has been added to, reassembly block 205 compares the now complete packet byte count value with the "length of payload" value from the AAL5 trailer. The two should match.

**Page 59, the fourth full paragraph, should be replaced with:**

Figure 52 is a diagram of an external memory device 529 that is coupled to a control integrated circuit. External memory device 529 may, for example, be external memory 225 of Figure 10. External memory device 529 stores two types of information, information #1 and information #2, both of which must be accessed within a particular amount of time related to the rate of incoming information. Where the control integrated circuit is clocked by a clock signal, this particular amount of time can be referred to as

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four clock periods. In the example to the left of Figure 52, each piece of information can be accessed in two clock periods. Both pieces of information are stored in the same external memory device requiring one to be accessed before the other. A total of four clock periods is therefore required to access both pieces of information.

**Page 60, the second full paragraph, should be replaced with:**

In accordance with one novel aspect, two external memories are used. Information #1 is stored in the first external memory 530 and information #2 is stored in second external memory 531. The two external memories are accessed at the same time in parallel. If external memories 530 and 531 are the same type of external memory 529, then these external memories have access times of two clock periods and both information #1 and information #2 are accessed within the required two clock periods. It is to be understood, of course, that the four and two in the example are used only to illustrate the technique of accessing memories in parallel to facilitate handling higher data throughput rates. The technique here is not limited to the numbers in this example. An example of information #1 is cell count information stored in the embodiment of Figure 10 in PFQ STAT memory 225. An example of information #2 is packet count information stored in the embodiment of Figure 10 in PFQ STAT memory 225. These two types of information are, in one embodiment of Figure 48, stored in different external memory devices.

**Page 60, line 32 (the header), should be replaced with:**

BACKPRESSURING USING SERIAL BUS:

**Page 70, the first full paragraph, should be replaced with:**

There is at most one segmentation process going on per port. Incoming burst data for a port is accumulated into a corresponding one of the 64-byte buffers in data SRAM 908. The maximum amount of data that can be stored in the 64-byte buffer (either 48, 56, or 64 bytes) is determined by the application type of the flow. The 64-byte format is used for packet data. The 48-byte format is used for AAL5 ATM data. The 56-byte format is used for non-AAL5 ATM data. Control information for the data in a 64-byte

buffer is queued into a location in queue FIFO 912 that corresponds to the particular 64-byte buffer. Segmentation table and statistics information is written back to the segmentation table and statistics memory 907. Input phase state machine 904 contains a six-bit data byte counter (not shown) that increments the six-bit "cell length" (also called the "chunk length") count value (stored in segmentation table memory 907) upon receiving each incoming data byte for a 64-byte buffer. When the number of bytes in the 64-byte buffer reaches the maximum amount allowed by the format used, then the data in the 64-byte buffer is ready for transfer to memory manager block 204.

**The paragraph from page 74, line 30 through page 75, line 8, should be replaced with:**

Although in this embodiment external memory 217 is ZBT (zero bus turnaround) SRAM, external memory 217 may in other embodiments be another type of memory such as, for example, DRAM. In some embodiments, bandwidth to external memory 217 is increased by realizing external memory 217 in multiple integrated circuit memory devices, where each is accessed via a different one of a plurality of interface ports controlled by the same memory controller block 1007. Memory controller 1007 in Figure 58 is programmable to interface with pipelined memory. In one such embodiment, the four memory locations where a chunk of data is stored are read in sequence. Although the reading of the first of the four locations requires multiple clock cycles, pipelining is employed such that the other of the four locations are read, one location on each subsequent clock cycle.

**The paragraph from page 84, line 20 through page 85, line 23, should be replaced with:**

Enqueue data pipe block 1115 converts data from 128-bit wide to 64-bit wide for entry into data SRAM 1107. Enqueue data pipe block 1115 also provides the appropriate delay necessary for enqueue state machine block 1101 to obtain the pointer needed to store the chunk into data SRAM 1107. Dequeue data pipe block 1116 delays data to the output FIFO block 1110 so that the header can be inserted and the CRC checked for L2 packets before the last word is sent. Header SRAM block 1106 is a

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256x64 bit internal dual port SRAM that stores header information on a per-port basis. The memory is organized as 128 sixteen-byte buffers so that two sixteen-byte headers are stored for each output port. Output FIFO block 1110 is a 32 x 88 bit FIFO implemented using dual port memory. The output FIFO is large enough to store three maximum size chunks. The output FIFO has two full indications (Almost Full and Full) and two empty indications (Almost Empty and Empty). Almost Full is asserted when the FIFO has ten locations left. Full is asserted when the FIFO has nine or fewer locations left. By indicating that the FIFO is almost full when it has only ten locations left, the dequeue state machine block 1108 can then send one more complete chunk. When the FIFO is one word beyond Almost Full, then the Full signal is asserted thereby indicating that once the current chunk is completed that no more chunks are to be transferred until Full goes inactive. Almost Empty is asserted when one word is left in the output FIFO. Empty is asserted when the output FIFO is empty. Outgoing SPI interface block 206 ORs the two empty signals together to determine when to pop the output FIFO. Outgoing SPI interface block 206 also uses the two empty signals to determine when only one word is left in the FIFO. This is necessary because the minimum POP size is two clock cycles, but when only one word is left the FIFO only has valid data for the first read of the FIFO. If Empty is active but Almost Empty is inactive, then only one word is in the FIFO. Dequeue state machine block 1108 causes data to be loaded into output FIFO block 1110 as long as output port calendar block 1109 indicates chunks are available and output FIFO block 1110 is not full. If output FIFO block 1110 goes full, then the current chunk being transferred is completed before reassembly block 1100 stops sending data to output FIFO block 1110. Outgoing SPI interface block 206 pops data from the output FIFO block 1110 as long as FIFO block 1110 is not empty and outgoing SPI interface block 206 is not inserting control words into the data stream. FIFO block 1110 allows outgoing SPI interface block 206 to control the flow of data from reassembly block 1100 so it has time to add the control words into the output data stream (coming out of outgoing SPI interface block 206) between bursts.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

Cancel Claims 1-44, without prejudice.

Add new Claims 45-59 as follows.

45.(New) A method involving a first line card, a second line card, and a switch fabric, the first line card comprising an ingress device and an egress device, the second line card comprising an ingress device and an egress device, a flow of network information flowing out of the ingress device of the first line card and through the switch fabric and to the egress device of the second line card, the egress device of the second line card having an amount of payload memory available for storing network information, the method comprising:

(a) detecting on the egress device of the second line card that the amount of available payload memory has reached a low level;

(b) in response to the detecting of (a) sending a first indication from the egress device of the second line card to the ingress device of the second line card, the first indication being sent from the egress device of the second line card to the ingress device of the second line card via a bus on the second line card;

(c) receiving the first indication on the ingress device of the second line card and in response sending a status switch cell from the ingress device of the second line card, through the switch fabric, and to the egress device of the first line card;

(d) receiving the status switch cell on the egress device of the first line card and in response sending a second indication from the egress device of the first line card to the ingress device of the first line card, the second indication being sent from the egress device of the first line card to the ingress device of the first line card via a bus on the first line card; and

(e) receiving the second indication on the ingress device of the first line card and in response slowing the flow of the network information out of the ingress device of the first line card.

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46.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the payload memory is coupled to the egress device of the second line card.

47.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the bus on the second line card is a serial bus, and wherein the bus on the first line card is a serial bus.

48.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the flow of the network information is slowed in (e) by stopping the flow of the network information out of the ingress device of the first line card.

49.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the egress device of the second line card maintains a free buffer queue, the free buffer queue having a size, the egress device of the second line card detecting that the amount of available payload memory has reached a low level in (a) by monitoring the size of the free buffer queue.

50.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the egress device of the second line card comprises a first integrated circuit, the ingress device of the second line card comprises a second integrated circuit, the egress device of the first line card comprises a third integrated circuit, and the ingress device of the first line card comprises a fourth integrated circuit, wherein the first, second, third and fourth integrated circuits are substantially structurally identical integrated circuits.

51.(New) The method of Claim 50, wherein each of the first, second, third and fourth integrated circuits is an integrated circuit that has a single data path, the single data path extending from a first bus interface, through segmentation circuitry, through reassembly circuitry, and to a second bus interface.

52.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the ingress device of the first line card is a multi-service segmentation and reassembly device, the multi-service segmentation and reassembly device receiving both flows of packets and flows of cells.

53.(New) A system, comprising:

a switch fabric;

a first line card comprising an ingress device and an egress device, the ingress device of the first line card being coupled to the egress device of the first line card via a first serial bus; and

a second line card comprising an ingress device and an egress device, the ingress device of the second line card being coupled to the egress device of the second line card via a second serial bus, the egress device of the second line card backpressuring the ingress device of the first line card by sending a backpressuring signal to the ingress device of the first line card, the backpressuring signal passing from the egress device of the second line card to the ingress device of the second line card via the second serial bus, the backpressuring signal then passing from the ingress device of the second line card to the egress device of the first line card in the form of a status switch cell passed from the ingress device of the second line card to the egress device of the first line card through the switch fabric, the backpressuring signal then passing from the egress device of the first line card to the ingress device of the first line card via the first serial bus.

54.(New) The system of Claim 53, wherein a flow of network information passes from the ingress device of the first line card, through the switch fabric, and to the egress device of the second line card, and wherein the ingress device of the first line card receives the backpressuring signal and in response thereto slows the flow of network information.

55.(New) The system of Claim 53, wherein the egress device of the second line card maintains a free buffer queue, the free buffer queue having a size, the egress device of the second line card sending the backpressuring signal via the second serial bus if the egress device of the second line card determines that the size of the free buffer queue has reached a low level.

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56.(New) The system of Claim 53, wherein the egress device of the second line card comprises a first integrated circuit, the ingress device of the second line card comprises a second integrated circuit, the egress device of the first line card comprises a third integrated circuit, and the ingress device of the first line card comprises a fourth integrated circuit, wherein the first, second, third and fourth integrated circuits are substantially structurally identical integrated circuits.

57.(New) The system of Claim 56, wherein each of the first, second, third and fourth integrated circuits is an integrated circuit that has a single data path, the single data path extending from a first bus interface, through segmentation circuitry, through reassembly circuitry, and to a second bus interface.

58.(New) A multi-service segmentation and reassembly (MS-SAR) device that in an egress mode detects a backpressuring situation and in response thereto outputs a backpressuring signal via a serial bus interface, the MS-SAR device in an ingress mode receives a backpressuring signal via a serial bus interface and in response thereto outputs a status switch cell.

59.(New) A multi-service segmentation and reassembly (MS-SAR) device that in an egress mode receives a status switch cell and in response thereto outputs a backpressuring signal via a serial bus interface, the MS-SAR device in an ingress mode receives a backpressuring signal via a serial bus interface and in response thereto slows a flow of network information passing out of the MS-SAR device.

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REMARKS

Consideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Before examination, please make the amendments as set forth above. After entry of this Preliminary Amendment, Claims 45-59 are pending. If the Examiner would like to discuss any aspect of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (925) 485-9923.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" addressed to Box Patent Application, Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on

October 12, 2001, as

Express Mail No.: EL928548114US.

T. Lester Wallace

Lester Wallace Oct. 12, 2001

Signature Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,

Lester Wallace

T. Lester Wallace  
Attorney for Applicants  
Reg. No. 34,748

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

**THE DRAWINGS:**

A copy of Figure 52 with the corrections indicated in red is attached.

**THE SPECIFICATION:**

**Page 1, before the first sentence of the specification, please add the following header and paragraph:**

**CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION**

This application is a divisional of application serial number 09/851,565, filed May 8, 2001.

**The paragraph from page 14, line 31 through page 15, line 10:**

Figure 4 is a simplified diagram of a router 100 in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. Router 100 includes a plurality of line cards 101-104, a switch fabric 105 and a central processing unit (CPU) 106. The line cards 101-104 are coupled to switch fabric 105 by parallel buses 107-114. In the present example, each of parallel buses 107-114 is a 16-bit SPI-4, Phase II, LVDS parallel bus operating at 400 MHz at a double data rate (DDR). CPU 106 is coupled to line cards 101-104 by another parallel bus 131. In the present example, parallel bus [130] **131** is a 32-bit PCI bus. In this example, each of the line cards can receive network communications in multiple formats. For example, line card 101 is coupled to a fiber optic cable 115 such that line card 101 can receive from cable 115 network communications at OC-192 rates in packets, ATM cells, and/or AAL5 cells. AAL5 cells are considered a type of ATM cell.

**Page 33, the first full paragraph:**

In accordance with egress application type 11, segmentation block 203 does not **perform** segmenting per se but rather forwards the 64-byte chunk to memory manager block 204 via the per-port FIFO mechanism described above. Memory manager block 204 issues an enqueue command via enqueue command line 320, and stores the 64-byte chunk in payload memory 217. Per flow queue block 207 adds the BID to the per flow queue for flow #1. The same process flow occurs for the second and third switch cells associated with flow #1.

**Page 34, the second full paragraph:**

Figure 32 illustrates the general flow of information out of egress MS-SAR 200 in one scenario when the linked lists for flow #1 and flow #2 are dequeued. As each BID is dequeued from a per flow queue, the associated 64-byte chunk is read from payload memory 217 and is supplied via [128-bite] **128-bit** wide data bus 324 to reassembly block 205. As explained above in connection with the ingress mode, reassembly block 205 maintains one reassembly queue for each of the 64 logical output ports. If two flows share the same logical output port, then the entire linked list for one flow must be dequeued before the linked list for the next flow having the same logical output port is dequeued. In the example of Figure 8, flow #1 and flow #2 have different logical output ports. The dequeue command as received by memory manager block 204 from per flow queue block 207 contains the port ID (PID) of the one of the 64 logical output ports of line card 103.

**Page 36, the second full paragraph:**

The AAL5 trailer also contains a sixteen-bit "length of payload" field that indicates the length of the payload of the packet being reassembled. Reassembly block 205 maintains a partial packet byte count value for the packet. As each 64-byte chunk of the packet is received from memory manager block 204, reassembly block 205 adds the number of bytes received to the partial packet byte count value. After the last 64-byte chunk for the packet has been received and the partial packet byte count value has been added to, reassembly block 205 compares the now complete packet byte count value with the "length of payload" value from the AAL5 trailer. The two should match.

**Page 59, the fourth full paragraph:**

Figure 52 is a diagram of an external memory device 529 that is coupled to a control integrated circuit. External memory device 529 may, for example, be external memory 225 of Figure 10. External memory device 529 stores two types of information, information #1 and information #2, both of which must be accessed within a particular amount of time related to the rate of incoming information. Where the control integrated circuit is clocked by a clock signal, this particular amount of time can be referred to as

[eight] **four** clock periods. In the example to the left of Figure 52, each piece of information can be accessed in two clock periods. Both pieces of information are stored in the same external memory device requiring one to be accessed before the other. A total of four clock periods is therefore required to access both pieces of information.

**Page 60, the second full paragraph:**

In accordance with one novel aspect, two external memories are used. Information #1 is stored in the first external memory 530 and information #2 is stored in second external memory 531. The two external memories are accessed at the same time in parallel. If external memories 530 and 531 are the same type of external memory 529, then these external memories have access times of two clock periods and both information #1 and information #2 are accessed within the required two clock periods. It is to be understood, of course, that the [eight] **four** and two in the example are used only to illustrate the technique of accessing memories in parallel to facilitate handling higher data throughput rates. The technique here is not limited to the numbers in this example. An example of information #1 is cell count information stored in the embodiment of Figure 10 in PFQ STAT memory 225. An example of information #2 is packet count information stored in the embodiment of Figure 10 in PFQ STAT memory 225. These two types of information are, in one embodiment of Figure 48, stored in different external memory devices.

**Page 60, line 32 (the header):**

[BACKPRESSING] **BACKPRESSURING** USING SERIAL BUS:

**Page 70, the first full paragraph:**

There is at most one segmentation process going on per port. Incoming burst data for a port is accumulated into a corresponding one of the 64-byte buffers in data SRAM 908. The maximum amount of data that can be stored in the 64-byte [bluffer] **buffer** (either 48, 56, or 64 bytes) is determined by the application type of the flow. The 64-byte format is used for packet data. The 48-byte format is used for **AAL5** ATM data. The 56-byte format is used for [other] **non-AAL5** ATM data. Control information for the data in a 64-byte buffer is queued into a location in queue FIFO 912 that corresponds to

the particular 64-byte buffer. Segmentation table and statistics information is written back to the segmentation table and statistics memory 907. Input phase state machine 904 contains a six-bit data byte counter (not shown) that increments the six-bit “cell length” (also called the “chunk length”) count value (stored in segmentation table memory 907) upon receiving each incoming data byte for a 64-byte buffer. When the number of bytes in the 64-byte buffer reaches the maximum amount allowed by the format used, then the data in the 64-byte buffer is ready for transfer to memory manager block 204.

**The paragraph from page 74, line 30 through page 75, line 8:**

Although in this embodiment external memory 217 is ZBT (zero bus turnaround) SRAM, external memory 217 may in other embodiments be another type of memory such as, for example, DRAM. In some embodiments, bandwidth to external memory 217 is increased by realizing external memory 217 in multiple integrated circuit memory devices, where each is accessed via a different one of a plurality of interface ports controlled by the same memory controller block 1007. Memory controller 1007 in Figure 58 is programmable to interface with pipelined memory. In one such embodiment, the four memory locations where a chunk of data is stored are read in sequence. Although the reading of the first of the four locations requires multiple clock cycles, pipelining is employed such that the other of the four locations are read, one location on each subsequent clock cycle.

**The paragraph from page 84, line 20 through page 85, line 23:**

Enqueue data pipe block 1115 converts data from 128-bit wide to 64-bit wide for entry into data SRAM 1107. Enqueue data pipe block 1115 also provides the appropriate delay necessary for enqueue state machine block 1101 to obtain the pointer needed to store the chunk into data SRAM 1107. Dequeue data pipe block 1116 delays data to the output FIFO block 1110 so that the header can be inserted and the CRC checked for L2 packets before the last word is sent. Header SRAM block 1106 is a 256x64 bit internal dual port SRAM that stores header information on a per-port basis. The memory is organized as 128 sixteen-byte buffers so that two sixteen-byte headers are stored for each output port. Output FIFO block 1110 is a 32 x 88 bit FIFO

implemented using dual port memory. The [Th e] output FIFO is large enough to store three maximum size chunks. The output FIFO has two full indications (Almost Full and Full) and two empty indications (Almost Empty and Empty). Almost Full is asserted when the FIFO has ten locations left. Full is asserted when the FIFO has nine or fewer locations left. By indicating that the FIFO is almost full when it has only ten locations left, the dequeue state machine block 1108 can then send one more complete chunk. When the FIFO is one word beyond Almost Full, then the Full signal is asserted thereby indicating that once the current chunk is completed that no more chunks are to be transferred until Full goes inactive. Almost Empty is asserted when one word is left in the output FIFO. Empty is asserted when the output FIFO is empty. Outgoing SPI interface block 206 ORs the two empty signals together to determine when to pop the output FIFO. Outgoing SPI interface block 206 also uses the two empty signals to determine when only one word is left in the FIFO. This is necessary because the minimum POP size is two clock cycles, but when only one word is left the FIFO only has valid data for the first read of the FIFO. If Empty is active but Almost Empty is inactive, then only one word is in the FIFO. Dequeue state machine block 1108 causes data to be loaded into output FIFO block 1110 as long as output port calendar block 1109 indicates chunks are available and output FIFO block 1110 is not full. If output FIFO block 1110 goes full, then the current chunk being transferred is completed before reassembly block 1100 stops sending data to output FIFO block 1110. Outgoing SPI interface block 206 pops data from the output FIFO block 1110 as long as FIFO block 1110 is not empty and outgoing SPI interface block 206 is not inserting control words into the data stream. FIFO block 1110 allows outgoing SPI interface block 206 to control the flow of data from reassembly block 1100 so it has time to add the control words into the output data stream (coming out of outgoing SPI interface block 206) between bursts.

#### THE CLAIMS:

Cancel Claims 1-44.

Add new Claims 45-59 as follows.

45.(New) A method involving a first line card, a second line card, and a switch fabric, the first line card comprising an ingress device and an egress device, the second line card comprising an ingress device and an egress device, a flow of network information flowing out of the ingress device of the first line card and through the switch fabric and to the egress device of the second line card, the egress device of the second line card having an amount of payload memory available for storing network information, the method comprising:

(a) detecting on the egress device of the second line card that the amount of available payload memory has reached a low level;

(b) in response to the detecting of (a) sending a first indication from the egress device of the second line card to the ingress device of the second line card, the first indication being sent from the egress device of the second line card to the ingress device of the second line card via a bus on the second line card;

(c) receiving the first indication on the ingress device of the second line card and in response sending a status switch cell from the ingress device of the second line card, through the switch fabric, and to the egress device of the first line card;

(d) receiving the status switch cell on the egress device of the first line card and in response sending a second indication from the egress device of the first line card to the ingress device of the first line card, the second indication being sent from the egress device of the first line card to the ingress device of the first line card via a bus on the first line card; and

(e) receiving the second indication on the ingress device of the first line card and in response slowing the flow of the network information out of the ingress device of the first line card.

46.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the payload memory is coupled to the egress device of the second line card.

47.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the bus on the second line card is a serial bus, and wherein the bus on the first line card is a serial bus.

48.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the flow of the network information is slowed in (e) by stopping the flow of the network information out of the ingress device of the first line card.

49.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the egress device of the second line card maintains a free buffer queue, the free buffer queue having a size, the egress device of the second line card detecting that the amount of available payload memory has reached a low level in (a) by monitoring the size of the free buffer queue.

50.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the egress device of the second line card comprises a first integrated circuit, the ingress device of the second line card comprises a second integrated circuit, the egress device of the first line card comprises a third integrated circuit, and the ingress device of the first line card comprises a fourth integrated circuit, wherein the first, second, third and fourth integrated circuits are substantially structurally identical integrated circuits.

51.(New) The method of Claim 50, wherein each of the first, second, third and fourth integrated circuits is an integrated circuit that has a single data path, the single data path extending from a first bus interface, through segmentation circuitry, through reassembly circuitry, and to a second bus interface.

52.(New) The method of Claim 45, wherein the ingress device of the first line card is a multi-service segmentation and reassembly device, the multi-service segmentation and reassembly device receiving both flows of packets and flows of cells.

53.(New) A system, comprising:  
     a switch fabric;  
     a first line card comprising an ingress device and an egress device, the ingress device of the first line card being coupled to the egress device of the first line card via a first serial bus; and  
     a second line card comprising an ingress device and an egress device, the ingress device of the second line card being coupled to the egress device of the second

line card via a second serial bus, the egress device of the second line card backpressuring the ingress device of the first line card by sending a backpressuring signal to the ingress device of the first line card, the backpressuring signal passing from the egress device of the second line card to the ingress device of the second line card via the second serial bus, the backpressuring signal then passing from the ingress device of the second line card to the egress device of the first line card in the form of a status switch cell passed from the ingress device of the second line card to the egress device of the first line card through the switch fabric, the backpressuring signal then passing from the egress device of the first line card to the ingress device of the first line card via the first serial bus.

54.(New) The system of Claim 53, wherein a flow of network information passes from the ingress device of the first line card, through the switch fabric, and to the egress device of the second line card, and wherein the ingress device of the first line card receives the backpressuring signal and in response thereto slows the flow of network information.

55.(New) The system of Claim 53, wherein the egress device of the second line card maintains a free buffer queue, the free buffer queue having a size, the egress device of the second line card sending the backpressuring signal via the second serial bus if the egress device of the second line card determines that the size of the free buffer queue has reached a low level.

56.(New) The system of Claim 53, wherein the egress device of the second line card comprises a first integrated circuit, the ingress device of the second line card comprises a second integrated circuit, the egress device of the first line card comprises a third integrated circuit, and the ingress device of the first line card comprises a fourth integrated circuit, wherein the first, second, third and fourth integrated circuits are substantially structurally identical integrated circuits.

57.(New) The system of Claim 56, wherein each of the first, second, third and fourth integrated circuits is an integrated circuit that has a single data path, the single data

path extending from a first bus interface, through segmentation circuitry, through reassembly circuitry, and to a second bus interface.

58.(New) A multi-service segmentation and reassembly (MS-SAR) device that in an egress mode detects a backpressuring situation and in response thereto outputs a backpressuring signal via a serial bus interface, the MS-SAR device in an ingress mode receives a backpressuring signal via a serial bus interface and in response thereto outputs a status switch cell.

59.(New) A multi-service segmentation and reassembly (MS-SAR) device that in an egress mode receives a status switch cell and in response thereto outputs a backpressuring signal via a serial bus interface, the MS-SAR device in an ingress mode receives a backpressuring signal via a serial bus interface and in response thereto slows a flow of network information passing out of the MS-SAR device.

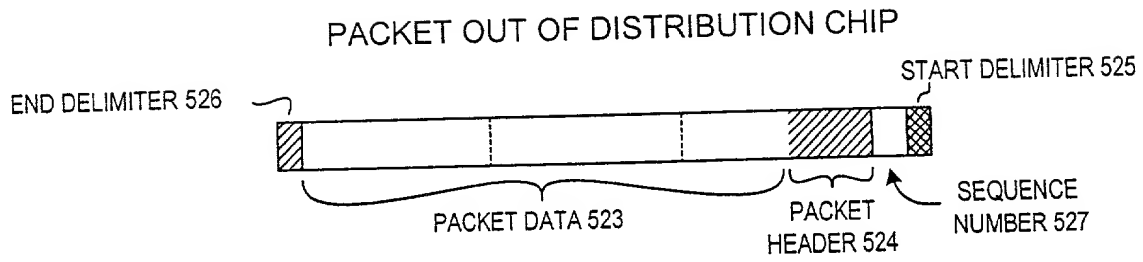
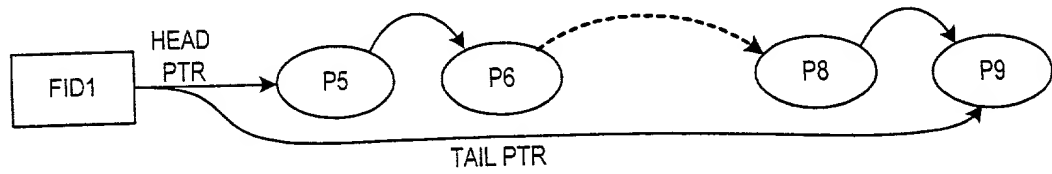
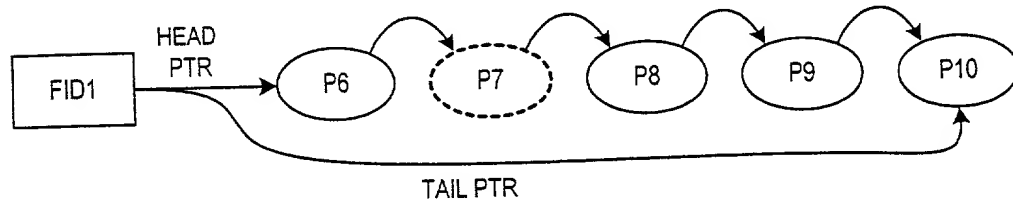


FIG. 49



PACKET QUEUE

FIG. 50



PACKET QUEUE

FIG. 51

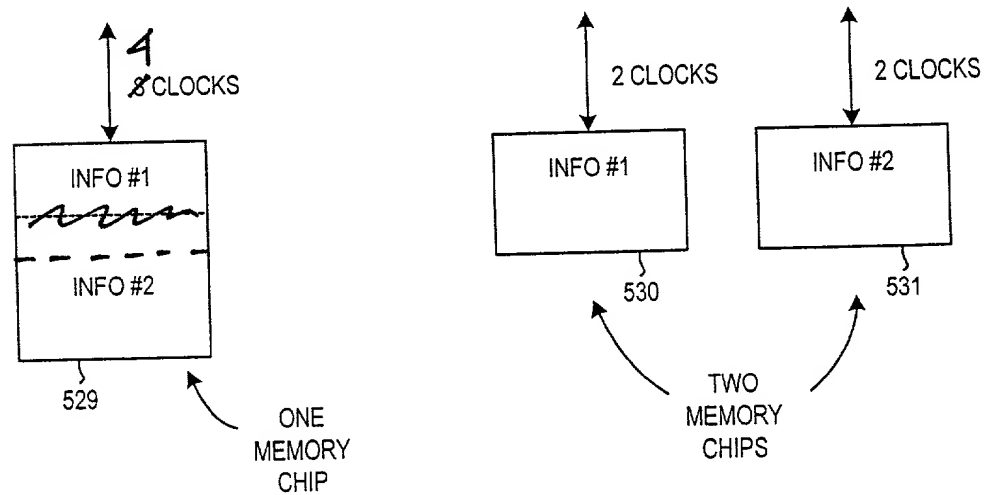


FIG. 52

FIG. 49